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Report of the Executive Committee

Presented at the First Annual Convention of
The Jewish Community (Kehillah)

New York, February 26 and 27, 1910



Published by
The Jewish Community (Kehillah), of New York City
356 Second Avenue, New York



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REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

DR. J. L. MAGNES

Delegates to the Kehillah:

In the name of your Executive Committee, I have the honor of welcoming you to this, our first convention, since our establishment as a Kehillah. As is but natural, some of our former delegates have seen fit to withdraw; but on the other hand, we are glad to have with us the delegates of many organizations not hitherto affiliated with us. In accord with our endeavor to bring about unity between Jews of all kinds, we may regard it as a good omen that we are privileged to welcome, for the first time, I believe, in communal affairs, an organization of Jews hailing from the Ottoman Empire.

During the year we have lost through death two of the founders of the Kehillah, Rev. Dr. Joseph Mayor Asher, Rabbi of Congregation Orach Chayim, and Dr. Max Moskievitz, President of the Federation of Polish Jews. Both of them were battlers in behalf of a powerful and unified Judaism. The Kehillah held a Memorial Meeting in honor of Dr. Asher at the Hebrew Charities Building, to which the Delegates of the Kehillah were invited.

During the year also, Mr. Joseph H. Cohen withdrew from our Executive Committee because of ill-health, and Mr. Nathan Bijur having been elected a Justice of the New York Supreme Court, withdrew by reason of the resolution of the last Convention, that no one holding public office was eligible to membership in the

Executive Committee. Mr. Abraham Abraham and Mr. Isidor Straus also withdrew from the Committee.

Before presenting the reports of the Executive Committee, it will be of interest to observe that the Kehillah movement has extended its influence to Jewish communities in other cities of this country. In Philadelphia, a committee is being formed for the creation of a body similar to our own; and in Louisville, Kentucky, the preliminary steps in the organization of a Kehillah have already been taken. We have been informed also of discussions concerning Kehillahs in other cities, and I am sure that I may give expression to our earnest hope that during the coming year other Jewish communities of this great country will have succeeded in forming themselves into Kehillahs.

It is significant of the sensitive nature of the Jewish organism the world over, that, simultaneous with our own activity in behalf of the formation of a Kehillah, a similar idea was being discussed by the Jews of Russia, with the result that last December a conference of prominent Russian Jews was held in Kovno, Russia, and resolutions were adopted recommending the re-organization of Russian Jewry upon the basis of Kehillahs. Whether this movement will have a successful outcome, or will go to pieces because of party strife, remains to be seen.

There is, to be sure, a fundamental difference between the Russian or any European Kehillah and our own. The Russian Kehillah, fashioned somewhat after the German model, would be authorized by the Government to collect proportionate taxes from each individual Jew living in a given community not less than one year. In this country, however, where there can be and should be no official connection between Church and State, such governmental authority to the Kehillah to levy taxes on individuals is impossible. As a consequence, instead of

having a Kehillah fund out of which to create and maintain such synagogues, schools, charitable societies and other institutions as may be necessary in Jewish life, it is left to the initiative of any Jew or group of Jews among us to meet their Jewish needs in whatever way and by whatever means they see fit. It is perhaps a salutary lesson that America has given in showing that even without governmental coercion or authority, Judaism has enough inner strength and the Jews enough natural love of Judaism to have conserved and developed Jewish institutions of their own free will.

But this very individualism gives rise to its own difficulties, and the problem before the Jewish community of New York City is, in miniature and along definite Jewish lines, the problem of all American legislation, how to steer a clear course between governmental paternalism on the one side and the anarchy of unrelated individual activity on the other. In other words, how can we form a cohesive, conscious body of the million Jews of this city, seeing that no coercion can be exercised upon them from without and that they have already spontaneously created a vast number of Jewish institutions. That this largest of the world's Jewish centers needs a co-ordination of its Jewish activities and a unified policy in meeting the growing number of its communal problems, it would be difficult for any one to dispute. But how bring about this co-ordination and a conscious, clear-sighted policy, unless the million scattered units realize, that whatever their differences of religion, culture, social station, nativity, they *are* a Kehillah, a community with common problems and aims. And how arouse this Kehillah-sense, unless through the very people themselves, through an organization that will be at once democratic and representative. A Jewish public opinion in favor of a Kehillah must indeed be created before a real Kehillah can come into being. But how create Jewish public opinion in all

quarters except by initiating a Kehillah, as we have tried to do, upon the basis of that considerable body of Jewish public opinion already in existence. We have tried to establish an organization that would afford a common platform to Jews from "uptown" and "downtown," to native and immigrant, to conservative and radical. We have tried to provide a meeting ground where Jews of various tendencies might learn to understand and to appreciate one another, where they might work together on behalf of our common cause, the cause of Judaism. In all of this, whatever we may have done or not done, we have never lost sight of the vast problem before us, that of becoming, not one of many good organizations, but the Kehillah itself, the Community, the authoritative head of the Jews of New York City. There have been some objections to our name as being too pretentious. If measured by the achievement of the last ten months, our name is pretentious indeed. But if we cannot eventually become the Kehillah in the highest sense of this term, our real reason for existence will have been lost.

And now to a discussion of our activities.

Our time has been spent, for the most part, in study of the best ways and means of attacking the tremendous problem before us, that of organizing the Jews of New York City into a conscious Community. Our study, however, has not been academic alone; it has been grounded upon actual achievement. By this I mean that whatever we may have accomplished—however good or indifferent the accomplishment may have been in itself—has served as but so much more material for our study of the situation. As a result, we may be said to possess, for the first time that any body of men has possessed this, something like expert knowledge of what the Jewish community of New York is, and what can be of most service to it.

(1). RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION.

The Chairman of this Committee will present a detailed report of this work later in the evening. The most important work of this Committee was the formation of a Vaad Horabbonim, A BOARD OF AUTHORITATIVE RABBIS, without which no Kehillah in Jewry can exist. This Board of Rabbis is the outcome of many meetings which were held in the first instance, by reason of our endeavor to prevent a strike of poultry Shochetim and to arrange improved conditions of life for many of them. It was soon discovered that the question of the poultry Shochetim was only one phase of the whole question of religious organization; and in order to cope with the whole problem the Board of Rabbis has been instituted. The Board expects to have special committees for the regulation of Kashruth, of Marriage and Divorce, of Circumcision and Ritual Baths, in connection with all of which there are many abuses; it will consider provisional synagogues, four of which were conducted by the Kehillah during the last holidays, and questions of Sabbath Observance; and it expects to institute, on a firm basis, a Beth Din before which many cases at law, now in the courts, may be adjudicated. At present, this Board of Rabbis is only tentatively organized, that is, the Rabbis themselves have come together—for the first time in many years—and they have expressed their eagerness to be of service; but their activity as a Board has scarcely begun. The machinery is ready to be set in motion, but the motive power is as yet lacking. I mean, that this work of the Rabbis, in order to be more than of a merely amateurish kind, needs at present about \$10,000 a year to carry it on. It will require larger funds than this as soon as we are able to appoint and support Kehillah Rabbis, who will have jurisdiction over carefully allotted districts of the Greater City. It will, therefore, be one of

our earliest duties to secure adequate sums for the Vaad Horabbonim.

The Committee has also given its attention to questions of the Jewishness of Jewish institutions and of Christian missionary activity among the Jews.

In connection with Sabbath Observance, the Committee can report that we contemplate introducing into this session of the New York Legislature a bill similar to that which has passed the United States Senate for the District of Columbia, and which has been favorably reported by the House of Representatives, and which the American Jewish Committee has had considerable share in drawing up. The bill, which our Committee will introduce into the Legislature at the proper time, is designed to permit such persons as observe the Jewish or any other Sabbath than the Christian Sabbath, to carry on their ordinary pursuits on Sunday. At our instigation, also, a bill is now before the present Legislature to enable voters to register on other days when the days of general registration for election happen to fall on the Jewish New Year or the Day of Atonement.

(2).

EDUCATION.

The report which will be presented by the Chairman of the Committee is, it seems to me, one of the most remarkable documents ever brought to the attention of the Jews of this city. For the first time we are enabled to get a picture of the Jewish educational situation in New York. The data for this report were gathered by ten investigators, one investigator for each allotted district, under the immediate direction of Dr. Bernard Cronson, to whose unselfish labors we are indebted for the thoroughness and comprehensiveness of the investigation. The results of the investigation are startling. We find thousands of Jewish children, over two-thirds of

all the Jewish children of school age, without any Jewish education at all, and of the remaining one-third all too many have only a superficial smattering of a Jewish training or are forced to attend the Jewish school under conditions such as often defy description. Many hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent yearly for Jewish education, but the results are hardly commensurate with the money or the energy or the love expended. This is a problem which, of itself, would justify the existence of a Community for its solution. Our ultimate aim must be the creation of an effective Jewish primary school system. Owing to the short time that can be given to Jewish studies, because of the necessities of a public school education, the Jewish school problem is difficult and delicate. Teaching methods, text-books, modern appliances, teachers, principals, a superintendent, a Board of Education, all are needed. Fortunately, this is a problem the importance of which not all are blind to, and I am happy to announce that Mr. Jacob H. Schiff has expressed his willingness, under conditions which I am sure we shall be able to work out, to give the Kehillah \$50,000, distributed over five years, for the purpose of improving and promoting Jewish religious primary education in this city. Our thanks are due Mr. Schiff for this manifestation of his generosity, and for his apprehension of the necessities of the situation.*

The Committee is also giving its attention to the creation of a teachers' organization, membership in which will be limited to such teachers as can pass the requisite test established by a Board of Examiners.

We have considered, furthermore, with the Trustees of the City College of New York City, the establishment at the City College of a Chair of Hebrew. The negotiations are still in progress, and we hope that such a Chair will be established by the opening of the next fall semester.

*Since this gift was announced, The New York Foundation, of which Professor Morris Loeb is President, has given the Kehillah an additional \$25,000 for purposes of Jewish education.

Through the initiative of one of our Executive Committee, Mr. Joseph Barondess, examinations in the Hebrew language are now being given by the State Board of Regents, and the examinations themselves are now of a reasonable severity.

(3). SOCIAL AND PHILANTHROPIC WORK.

This Committee conducted an investigation concerning the necessity and feasibility of establishing an employment bureau primarily for Jewish immigrants handicapped by ignorance of the English language. The investigation showed that such a bureau is both necessary and feasible. We communicated our findings to the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society, which conducts a small employment bureau and which is charged with the care of immigrants. It appears that a yearly sum of \$5,000 will be needed to conduct an efficient bureau. The Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society can, however, provide for only \$1,500 of this sum; and in the event of our being able to come to a satisfactory understanding with the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society as to the management of the bureau, we shall be glad to co-operate with the Society in appealing to the public for the remaining \$3,500.

The question of the activity of Immigration Commissioner Williams has also engaged the attention of this Committee. The whole question of immigration, being of national rather than local import, properly belongs within the sphere of the American Jewish Committee, of which the Kehillah is a constituent part. The Jewish population of New York, however, was so exercised over Commissioner Williams' severe interpretation of the statutes, that upon the request of the Kehillah, the President and the Executive of the American Jewish Committee authorized us to call a conference to discuss

the situation. Present at the conference were representatives of the Kehillah, of the American Jewish Committee, of a Conference of Grandmasters of Jewish Fraternal Orders, of the Independent Order Bnai Brith District No. 1, of the American Jewish Society for the Regulation of Immigration, and of the attorneys in the Skuratowski habeas corpus proceedings. After a thorough discussion, the conference decided to issue a statement explaining the exact situation at Ellis Island. Such a statement was prepared, but it was eventually not deemed expedient to issue it.

This Committee also made inquiries as to the number of Jewish dependent children in non-Jewish institutions and in non-Jewish private homes. It was found that there were over 600 such children. This was communicated to the Council of Jewish Communal Institutions, and subsequently a conference was called by the Kehillah at which were present representatives of the Hebrew Infant Asylum, the Hebrew Orphan Asylum, the Hebrew Sheltering Guardian Society and the United Hebrew Charities. The correspondence with the Council of Jewish Communal Institutions and the discussion at the conference showed that the greatest number of these children were either below the age of five years or in such physical condition as not to be eligible for admission to the child-caring institutions. It was the sense of the conference that such children be cared for by boarding out or adoption in Jewish families where their care cannot be provided for by Jewish institutions. The Kehillah was further requested to obtain detailed information about the condition and the ages of such children, this information to be communicated to Jewish child-caring institutions, so that these children may be cared for whenever room for them can be found. At the same time, the Kehillah in conjunction with the Council of Jewish Communal Institutions is directing a circular letter to the constituent organizations

of the Kehillah, notifying them of the conditions under which the City of New York pays for the support of orphans in homes, and asking them for the names and addresses of such Jewish families as would be inclined to take orphan children in under the conditions named. In this connection, I would repeat the statement of our Committee at the initial meeting of the Executive of the Kehillah: "That co-operation between the various benevolent institutions would conduce to their greater efficiency, to the ascertainment or recognition of needs not met by existing institutions and generally to a better supervision of the field of philanthropic endeavor, so as to obviate the creation of unnecessary institutions, facilitate the establishment of new ones where needed, and avoid duplication of effort wherever possible;" and the Committee pointed out that to a certain extent, this function is already being exercised by the Council of Jewish Communal Institutions, and suggested that the Council be apprised of our readiness to co-operate with it in any matter in which such co-operation may be useful.

This Committee also was called upon to deal with the so-called "White Slave" charges, as contained in an article in *McClure's Magazine* of November, 1909. The Executive Committee of the Kehillah was called together in special session on October 26th, and the following statement was issued to the public:

"It is impossible at this moment to make a complete examination of the statements and charges contained in *McClure's* for November. Such an investigation, so far as it relates to the Jews, is in progress and has been for the past several months. As soon as the data have been collated, the Jewish Community will take prompt steps to bring to the attention of the authorities such specific cases as will lead to the punishment of wrong-doers. In the meantime, however, it may be said that the investigation, so far as it has gone, shows the article in *McClure's* to be exaggerated and libellous in its treatment of the Jews. We have it on the authority of Deputy Commissioner Woods, who, as Police Commissioner Bingham's assistant, looked into this particular question in New York City, that so far as he was able to ascertain, there were no Jews among the

importers of girls. The article in the *Evening Post*, of October 23d, substantiates this insofar that few, if any, Jewish names appear among those convicted of this crime. Assuming that this investigation was not complete, and that some Jews may yet be found in this nefarious trade, it is obvious that the Jews have no such monopoly of this business as to justify the slanderous statements and inferences contained in this magazine article."

Subsequent investigation by our Committee has given us no reason to change this statement. Our investigation has been as thorough as it was possible for one of the best-known criminal lawyers of this city, with sufficient funds at his disposal, to make it. Testimony was invited, and evidence was looked for on all sides, and as far as our investigation shows, we herewith solemnly declare that, whereas a few sporadic instances of so-called "White Slavery" among the Jews may be found, no such thing as an organized international or national trade in women among the Jews can be found. It would seem that charges against our people recur with regularity, and we regard it as our function to ascertain the truth of such charges, be this truth agreeable or disagreeable to us. We are not desirous of claiming virtues that do not belong to us, but we do not intend to submit to malicious attacks upon our good name. It cannot be denied that some phases of the social evil—and this is distinct from so-called "White Slavery"—present grave problems to us, and it behooves us to meet them with candor and with energy. These problems, however, are by no means distinctively Jewish, and we would unite our forces with those of the good people of this city to the end that the whole city may be made as normal and as healthful as possible. We have received an invitation, furthermore, to attend a conference in London called by the Gentlemen's Committee for the Protection of Women and Girls. We have answered that we cannot think of sending a representative until we are convinced that the conference is to do something more than engage in some

of the loose talk about so-called "White Slavery," we are hearing so much of at present.

(4). AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE.

At this convention, the American Jewish Committee, of which our Kehillah is the New York constituency, will report as to its activities. This is the first time that the American Jewish Committee has made a report to a constituent organization, and this in itself shows the progress of the democratic spirit in American Jewry. We hope that in time all of the large Jewish communities of this country will be organized into Kehillah constituencies of the American Jewish Committee.

(5). ADVISORY COUNCIL.

The Advisory Council has had six meetings, one of these meetings being in conjunction with the Executive Committee to receive a report from the Executive concerning its activity.

Many of the members of the Advisory Council have been active on the committees of the Executive, and their suggestions have been of value. During the year, it has been our endeavor to make the functions of the Advisory Council clear to ourselves, and although we have not as yet succeeded in determining exactly the place of the Advisory Council in our organization, it can only be with patience and in the course of time that definite relations will be established. For the coming year, it would seem to me that the Advisory Council have stated meetings in April, June, October, December and February; and at these meetings the chairmen of our standing committees should be required to make report of their activity and their plans, and to receive the suggestions of the members of the Advisory Council.

(6). PROPAGANDA AND ORGANIZATION.

This committee has carried on correspondence with the officers of various Jewish organizations and grand-masters of Jewish orders, seeking the further affiliation of Jewish bodies with the Kehillah. Circular letters, leaflets and pamphlets have been sent out, outlining our work, and emphasizing the need of uniting our people and unifying our work. In co-operation with this committee, our office has arranged conferences of representatives from societies not affiliated with us, these meetings having been held in Harlem, Brooklyn and East New York. As the result of the work done by this committee and of the propaganda carried on from our office, through the circulation of literature and through articles in the press, we have secured since the last convention, up to the present time, the affiliation of 80 congregations and societies. Excluding several societies which have withdrawn from our organization and those which have ceased to be affiliated through falling into arrears, the Jewish Community is now made up of 674 congregations and societies, inclusive of Federation societies, which are represented through their Federations.

(7). KEHILLAH OFFICE.

The office of the Kehillah, in charge of our efficient Secretary, Mr. B. G. Richards, was opened last May. Though greatly handicapped by lack of proper clerical help, our office has kept in touch with and helped the work of all our standing and special committees. Many conferences and meetings were held in our office during the year. These were not always fruitful of results, and our workers met with the usual disappointments. But through its various attempts and plans, and through its investigation of different conditions affecting Jewish

life, the Kehillah has kept gradually evolving into a strong and comprehensive body. The various suggestions sent to us and the demands made upon us by affiliated societies and others served but to emphasize the need of such an organization and the possibility of its greater usefulness in the future. Appeals for aid and support have come to us from organizations and individuals who, in one way or another, have met with difficulties which, either rightly or wrongly, they have thought to be the concern of the whole Jewish people. Our attention was called by Jewish employees of the Police Department, of the Street Sweeping Department, and of the Post Office, to the difficulties they experienced in getting excused on the Jewish New Year and Day of Atonement. Those in charge of these branches of the government have assured us that as many Jewish employees are excused as is possible, without crippling the service. Complaints were brought to us that entrance examinations are held and semester sessions begun in the various Colleges on the Jewish High Holidays. Inquiry brought us the information that at Columbia University any student is entitled to a special examination upon application. It should be said in all fairness that the Jewish students do not seem to mind much on what day, be it a Jewish holiday or not, the examinations are held. The City College, Cooper Institute and the State Board of Regents have all assured us that in the future they will bear the dates of the Jewish holidays in mind when making up their schedules for the year. At the time of the Hudson-Fulton Celebration we were asked by the Committee in charge to take part in the historical parade of the various nationalities now settled in New York City. Two Jewish organizations—the Jewish Civil War Veterans and the Jewish Spanish War Veterans—having already signified their intention to parade, and for various other reasons, it was not deemed advisable for us to participate

in the parade. Two strikes also were called to our attention, the Jewish Bakers strike and the Jewish Retail Clerks' strike. In the first instance we were able to do but very little. In the second instance we had several meetings with employers and employees, but with little result. Eventually the Executive Committee decided that the whole matter was beyond our jurisdiction. We have also been asked to investigate the conditions surrounding the Chalukkah, that is, money collected from the little boxes in hundreds of houses for the benefit of the poor of Palestine. The managers of the various funds are all desirous of having us bring order out of the chaos. In addition, there have come to our office various inquiries and requests for information about the Jews and Jewish institutions of New York, not only from this country, but also from Canada, from England and from Germany. All of this has made the work devolving upon our office grow to such proportions that it has become impossible to cope with it with our present facilities. We therefore appeal to this convention to put our office into possession of the modest sum of \$5,000 for administrative purposes. This sum, in addition to the dues we expect to receive, will cover salaries and all other necessary office expenses.

It is clear, I believe, from what has been said of our purposes and of our activities, that the Kehillah is in need of a large endowment. Without such endowment as will yield us \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year for all purposes of religious organization, education, social and philanthropic work and administrative expense, the Kehillah will not be able to accomplish its aims. Up to the present time, we have been proceeding on the theory that the dues from affiliated organizations were to be used for current expenses, whereas the funds for the provisional synagogues, the education investigation, the employment bureau investigation, the "White Slave" investigation,

have been generously provided us by friends whom we take this occasion to thank for their kindness.

Delegates to the convention, I have endeavored to show you what our Executive Committee has had it in mind to do. Each day has brought us new proofs of the need of a Kehillah, and it has been our privilege to do pioneer work in trying to meet these needs. But however diligently the Executive Committee may work, it depends in the last instance upon the affiliated organizations themselves whether or not our activity is to be effective. We would impress it upon the organizations that it is their duty to be in communication with us, to take cognizance of our work as the reports of it are sent to the press, or to the Advisory Council or to the delegates themselves. The suggestions and criticisms of the affiliated organizations are welcome. Our great purpose is the unity of Israel, and to this end each individual organization is called upon to devote itself. May the next year of our existence increase the strength of the Kehillah and its power to help the cause of Judaism.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION

DR. H. PEREIRA MENDES, Chairman.

The Committee on Religious Organization has given much thought to the many problems affecting the religious interests of the Jews of New York City.

1st. The practical work that we have accomplished has been limited to the provisional synagogue effort through which we conducted services on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur in Clinton Hall, the Boys' Technical School, the Girls' Technical School, and the Young Women's Hebrew Association. These services were very successful. The total expense was \$885.50.

The object of these provisional synagogues is to counteract the services held in dance halls, or in places with improper surroundings.

We are trying, with the help of certain Jewish institutions, to secure further accommodation for more provisional synagogues next year.

2d. We have had meetings with Shochetim; we have tried to reconcile disputes; we have fostered the idea of union of interests and have thus prepared for a better general regulation of Kashruth, further details of which will presently be stated.

3d. We have, from time to time, suggested to the Executive of the Kehillah, certain pressing religious needs of the community. We have not expected that the Kehillah, in the first year of its existence, could cope with all of these problems. We have been satisfied to bring them to notice in the hope that each year will witness a nearer approach to the realization of the solutions we have offered or will call forth other solutions as good or

better. We feel that Jewish public opinion must be educated towards these ends. Therefore time and much time is required.

4th. Your Committee wishes to emphasize the necessity of strengthening the Sabbath observance movement. The Sabbath is the vital question of American Judaism. Upon it depend the most serious, the most vital interests of the New York Jewish community.

5th. We have carefully considered the duty of educating public opinion to ideals of Jewish worship and Jewish education higher than those which obtain in many directions. Our provisional synagogue services have been a step in this direction by reason of their management and decorum.

6th. For a systematic and comprehensive scheme of work we have carefully considered a Vaad Horabonim or organization of our Rabbis.

This Vaad Horabonim, as we have developed it, is as follows:

1st. The Vaad Horabonim shall consist of ordained Rabbis, i. e. Rabbis with Semicha, and recognized ministers of (incorporated) congregations of this city. Their duty shall be the supervision of the religious matters affecting the community, and shall be associated with committees of laymen for purposes other than religious, such as financial matters, legal proceedings, co-ordination of activities, etc.

2d. It shall elect its own officers and the following sub-committees:

(a) Committee of ordained Rabbis, Rabbis with Semicha, for the regulation of Shechita, e. g. supervision of slaughter houses, appointment of Shochetin, Mashgichim, etc. The members of this committee shall be paid, in order that they may devote the necessary time to these duties. Rabbis at present supervising Shechita shall not be disturbed, but shall be notified to associate

themselves with the Vaad Horabonim, and especially with the sub-committee.

(b) An associate sub-committee of laymen, as above alluded to, for finance, legal procedures, co-ordination, etc.

(c) A sub-committee for the regulation, supervision or licensing of retail butchers, restaurants and delicatessen stores.

Owing to the immense area to be covered, either the city would have to be redistricted into lower east side, middle east side, Yorkville, Harlem, lower and upper west side, and sub-committees in each district take charge of the retail stores in matters of Kashruth, located in said district, or if found preferable, one sub-committee can take charge of all retail butchers, another of the restaurants, and a third of the delicatessen stores.

It is suggested that a neat and properly framed sign, with a registered design, and signed by the leaders of this movement, be rented out monthly to those stores that are willing to subject themselves to the supervision and government of this sub-committee of the Vaad Horabonim. They shall pay weekly for the privilege of using the signs, and said amount shall be collected by the lay-committee for the payment of the visiting Shomerim or Mashgichim who shall report favorably on the cleanliness of the stores and the trustworthiness of the owners.

(d) A sub-committee of Rabbis for the regulation and supervision of matters affecting Kedushin, Get and Gerim.

(e) A sub-committee of Rabbis and surgeons for the licensing of Mohelim.

(f) The encouragement of model synagogues with a resident Rabbi whose scholarship shall appeal to the elders and two or more young assistants whose American education, combined with Jewish loyalty, shall hold and educate the young men, the young women, and the children.

(g) A sub-committee of Rabbis and associate laymen for the supervision of those stores or factories that provide Passover requirements.

(h) A sub-committee of associate laymen to publish the lists of accredited retail butchers, restaurants, delicatessen stores and Passover provision stores in the Jewish papers, through Congregational membership lists or otherwise, and to appeal to Jews and Jewesses to loyally support the accredited stores, that is, the stores exhibiting the license of the Vaad Horabonim.

(i) A Beth Din, whose members shall be paid. This will lessen the number of Jewish cases in the courts.

The establishment of a Vaad Horabonim means the creation of a considerable fund until sub-committees a and b adopt a system similar to the Board of Shechita of the United Synagogue or Kehilla, in Great Britain.

7th. Your Committee has also considered the conversionist problem. We have recommended and do recommend that Jewish children committed to Christian or non-sectarian institutions, or Jewish inmates of such institutions be transferred to Jewish institutions where possible. Further, that the Kehilla lend its assistance to Jewish congregations without religious schools for boys and girls to establish such schools; Jewish centers for Jewish settlement work which shall be strictly Jewish in its influence upon the men and women, especially the mothers, in the said congested quarters.

These suggestions mean the formation of many working centers, but we believe that with the help of associate members of the Kehilla, whose names shall mean work and not nominal adherence, many earnest men and women can be found in those very quarters who will be glad to co-operate.

8th. The Jewishness of our Jewish institutions is another important subject requiring action on the part of the Kehilla. The New York Board of Jewish Minis-

ters, and the Union of Orthodox Jewish congregations, have taken action. The co-operation of the Kehilla is strongly recommended by the Religious Committee.

The subject of Jewish education naturally concerns the Committee on Religious Organization. While there is a separate committee on this subject, we think our committee, or some of its members, should co-operate with it in matters affecting methods, school books, training of teachers, graduation, post-graduation, etc., with due regard to the various shades of Jewish opinion.

We conclude this brief report by earnestly exhorting the Executive, the Advisory Board and the members of the Kehilla not to lose hope or heart, not to be intimidated by the many failures that have been made by previous attempts, but to unite all activities that are working for the same or similar ends until Jewish public opinion shall be thoroughly united.

We cannot build up success in one year **את המלאכה** לא עלינו לגמור. Our earnestness, our courage, shall surely bear the test for many a year to come.

But we will do our part, not for our glory, but for the glory of our God.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON JEWISH EDUCATION.

DR. MORDECAI M. KAPLAN, Chairman.

When the committee first set out to do its work it found that it would be futile to attempt anything before making an investigation into the conditions which at present prevail in the field of Jewish education of this city. It, thereupon, enlisted the aid of Dr. Bernard Cronson, a principal of one of the public schools of this city, who undertook to supervise the investigation. Almost the whole territory of Greater New York has been covered, and there is hardly any Jewish school or cheder which has not had one of the investigators visit it. Statistics have been gathered with regard to neighborhood, nature of building, number and size of rooms, light, ventilation, furniture, number of pupils, salaries and training of teachers, curriculum and text-books, etc., in the case of each school. As a result of this investigation, which is almost complete, we are enabled to present the following bird's-eye view of the Jewish educational situation of Greater New York.

There are at present six different agencies which afford Jewish education to the children of this city:

- (a) Talmud Torah Schools.
- (b) Institutional Schools.
- (c) Congregational Schools.
- (d) Sunday Schools.
- (e) Chedorim.
- (f) Private Tutors.

There are hardly any two schools of the first four kinds which are alike. The description, therefore, which we

propose to give in each case is not a description of any one particular school, but of the type as a whole. Each school has, no doubt, individual features which differentiate it from the rest of its kind, for better or for worse.

(a) A Talmud Torah school is a school established for the purpose of giving Jewish instruction to children, mainly to boys. It is only of late that girls' classes have begun to appear. The schools are located in congested Jewish neighborhoods, and are attended mostly by the children of the poor. In many instances, the children are given shoes and clothing, and in a few cases even meals. On the whole, about 50 per cent. of the pupils pay each from forty to fifty cents a month. Membership fees and contributions, however, from those more fortunately situated, constitute the main source of support.

A Talmud Torah school occupies the whole or the greater part of some building, and has at its disposal a number of class-rooms ranging from four to twenty. With few exceptions, the cleanliness, ventilation and light of the class rooms are far from what they ought to be. The equipment is very poor. The desks are old and the text-books thumbworn. Instruction is given daily from 4 P. M. to 8 P. M., in two sessions, to two different groups of children, and on Sundays from 9 A. M. to 3 P. M. The aim of the school authorities is to instil into the children a knowledge of Judaism, by means of as much of the original content as possible, chiefly, the prayer book and the Bible in Hebrew. The curriculum, which is worked out by the principal and the school board, provides for specific teaching of history and religion. But neither the aim nor the curriculum is carried out in practice, because there are at present very few teachers capable of furthering the realization of such aim, and the few that are capable, the Talmud Torah cannot afford to engage.

The teachers are either immigrants who have acquired

a fair amount of English, though not enough to enable them to use it flexibly and to adapt it to the needs of the children; or young men preparing for some profession, who teach, in order to be able to make their way through college. The salaries are from \$25 to \$40 a month, only in rare instances exceeding the latter figure. In either case, the teaching is bound to be very poor, even though most of the instruction is carried on in English. In this regard, there is a marked improvement in those schools where the Ibrith B'Ibrith method is employed. Seldom, if ever, are any English text-books made use of; home work is never allotted; the discipline is poor; the attendance is very irregular, and seldom kept up for any length of time. This last is due to the fact that the Jewish population of the poor is constantly shifting from place to place, which circumstance presents another obstacle to the progress that ought to be made in the studies, considering the number of hours devoted to them. A noteworthy fact in these schools is the overcrowded condition of the lower classes and the meagre attendance in the upper classes. The number simply tapers out, and there is no need found for any formal graduation. In spite of all these defects, the Talmud Torah schools instil more Jewishness into the lives of the children than any of the agencies following.

(b) The Institution schools are of two types, (1) those that belong to orphan asylums, and (2) those that form part of institutions which do social work. Those of the latter kind, however, which give religious instruction only once a week are included under Sunday schools.

The Institutional schools of the orphan asylum type have almost ideal equipments and every facility to render them effective religious schools. What is more, they have the opportunity of having the kind of environment, that could easily emphasize in practice the religious lessons that they are taught in the class-room. Unfor-

tunately, little has thus far been done to take advantage of all this to bring about model teaching, that would imbue the inmates with enthusiasm for the Jewish life. Of late there have been evident in some quarters signs of taking the matter of Jewish instruction more seriously. In the meantime, the instruction is not carried on with any serious or definite aim, and with little or no record kept of the work.

The Institutional school of the second type is a marked improvement upon the first. It takes advantage of all the superior equipment it possesses, to bring about all of the method and system which is characteristic of the public school. Its aim is to impart a knowledge of religion, in which the knowledge of Hebrew is only of secondary importance. It works for that aim consciously and systematically. It has proper grading, teachers that are acquainted with rules of pedagogy, and a record of all the work done. The attendance is better than in any other kind of Jewish school. The aim, however, is one which does not have the sympathy of the Jewish population where these institutional schools exist, because they do not regard it as Jewish enough insofar as it makes Hebrew only secondary. That this is their attitude, is proved by the fact that they send mostly their girls to these schools and their boys to the Chedorim. On the other hand, if these schools were to put more stress upon the study of Hebrew, they would not get the teachers that could conduct them on a modern basis.

(c) A Congregational school is one which is connected with a congregation, but which we do not designate as a Sunday school because it holds sessions three or more times a week. The congregations to which these schools belong are generally conservative or orthodox. As they meet in the vestry rooms, the light and ventilation in the class-rooms are very seldom of the best. Though the children of the members do not have to pay any tuition

fee, they form a very small per cent. of the school, because their parents prefer to give them private teachers in their own homes. The school is maintained from the fees collected from children of outsiders who pay from one to two dollars a month. The deficit is supplied from the treasury of the congregation. About one-third of the children are free. Here the proportion of boys to girls is about two to one.

The teachers, who are usually American young men, with here and there some women, possess a fair knowledge of things Jewish. In the case of the majority of the teachers, the salaries which range from \$25 to \$35 a month, the former for three times a week, the latter for five times, are merely a means of sustaining them during their student days. Nevertheless, there is more interest displayed in the work, by reason of the lesser number of hours they are obliged to teach than in the Talmud Torah schools. The rabbi of the congregation is usually the superintendent, and he is assisted or hindered in his work by a school committee.

Instruction is given from three to five times a week, afternoons from 4 to 6 P. M., and on Sunday morning from 9 to 12 A. M. A regular curriculum is followed. The work covered is not very extensive, and is usually confined to the reading and translation of the prayers, and of a few passages in the Bible, with a smattering of a few rules of grammar. The instruction is carried on in English, and English text-books, such as they are, are widely made use of, for History and Religion. In very few cases, the children are given work to do at home. The attendance is very irregular and seldom is of long duration for the same reason as in the Talmud Torah schools. The discipline is inferior to that of the institutional schools, although prizes are offered and graduation held at the end of each year.

(d) A Sunday school is usually a congregational

school which meets only once a week, on Sunday mornings. This school is attended for the most part by children of the parents who belong to the congregation. A small per cent. of outside children are admitted free. There is another type of Sunday school, known as a Mission school, which is supported by some wealthy congregation, and which meets in some settlement building in a congested section of the city. The second kind of Sunday school is mostly attended by children of the poor. In both of these schools, the teachers are mostly women, who are also public school teachers, and many of whom volunteer their services gratis; of those who are paid, the salaries average from \$10 to \$12 a month. The teachers, usually, have the training but not the knowledge necessary for a Jewish school. A vague kind of curriculum is carried out, and the work, such as it is, is supervised by the rabbi and the committee. The teaching is only in English, and extensive use is made of text-books and illustrative material. Home work is given out. The attendance is good, the discipline is fair. An integral part of the Sunday school work is an elaborate system of prizes, graduation and confirmation.

(e) A Cheder is a school conducted by one, two or three men, for the sole purpose of eking out some kind of a livelihood which they failed to obtain by any other means. It generally meets in a room or two, in the basement or upper floor of some old dilapidated building where the rent is at a minimum. It is thus, usually, to be found in the environment of crowded tenement houses, shops, saloons, and dancing halls. The main consideration with the teacher being, to have the outlay at as low a figure as possible, the cheder is usually filthy, the light dim, and air stuffy. The long table or the rickety desks have seen a better day. The fees of the children, which average from seventy-five cents to a dollar a month, minus the expense involved in the outlay upon the paraphernalia

named, constitute the teachers' net earnings. The Cheder is attended mainly by boys and in few cases also by girls.

The instruction, which seldom goes beyond the reading of the prayer book, and the teaching of a few blessings by rote, is carried on only in Yiddish. The method of instruction is quite unique. It consists of about fifteen minutes of individual instruction, with seldom or never any class work. Each pupil, not knowing when he is needed straggles in at random, and waits for his turn to come, in the meantime entertaining himself with all sorts of mischief. When his turn comes and the teacher has given him the fifteen minutes, he runs off. There is hardly an ideal aim in the mind of the teacher, except in some cases it is the training for the Bar-Mitzvah feat of reading the Haftorah. The pupils seldom stay with the teacher longer than six or eight months, when they go to try another one in the neighborhood.

A variation from this type of Cheder, is what I would designate, the modern Cheder, the variation being due to the personality of the one conducting it. Like the Cheder, it is established primarily as a business undertaking. But the teachers interested in it are of Jewish nationalistic tendencies, are well versed in Hebrew and appreciative of modern pedagogic methods. They obtain light, roomy quarters, though irregardless of the environment. These they manage to keep clean, and to furnish with modern school furniture. Some part of the time is given to instruction of girls as well as boys. The fees range as high as \$3 per month.

The school is divided into grades, a curriculum is followed, and the aim is made very definite and limited. The wants of parents are sought to be met with as well as the ideals of the organizers. The discipline is good, and the results accomplished are quite tangible. The good work that could have been done is, of course, vitiated by the business end of it. There are too few of this type,

however, to regard them as an important factor in the Jewish education of this city.

(f) The sixth agency, namely, the private tutors, is not amenable to the process of investigation, and we have to satisfy ourselves with a rough estimate of their numbers.

The following figures will give an approximate idea of the work done by the respective agencies named:

MANHATTAN.

	No.	Boys.	Girls.	Teachers.
Talmud Torahs	16	6,712	828	118
Institutional	13	2,072	3,675	136
Congregational	14	1,359	657	59
Sunday schools	20	1,682	1,977	160
Chedorim	259	9,359	297	429

BRONX.

Congregational	13	823	368	38
Chedorim	11	156	3	12

BROOKLYN.

Talmud Torahs	8	2,650	520	45
Institutional	4	230	975	15
Congregational	11	653	115	26
Sunday schools	7	715	1,140	48
Chedorim	197	4,002	120	211

QUEENS AND RICHMOND.

Congregational	4	105	51	7
Sunday schools	2	40	105	9
Chedorim	1	15	—	1

GREATER NEW YORK.

Talmud Torahs. . . .	24	9,362	1,348	163
Institutional.	17	2,302	4,650	151
Congregational. . . .	42	2,940	1,191	130
Sunday schools. . . .	29	2,437	3,222	217
Chedorim.	468	13,532	420	653
<hr/>				
Total.	580	30,573	10,831	1,314
Total number of pupils.				
41,404				

The most crowded places in Manhattan are from Monroe Street up to Ninth Street, East, and from Ninety-ninth Street up to 118th Street, East. The central points are Houston Street and 110th Street. In Brooklyn the most crowded places are Brownsville, beginning with East New York Avenue; and East New York beginning with Pitkin Avenue stretching to the end of the inhabited streets. In Williamsburg, the central point is about Graham Avenue and Cook Street.

The study of the Jewish educational situation of this city has served to point out the following conditions:

1. The demand for Jewish education is comparatively small.
2. Small as the demand is, the means and equipment which we possess at present are far too inadequate to meet it.
3. Wherever that demand is met there is a lack either of system or of content.

1. To remedy the first evil, that of the comparatively small demand, there is necessary a religious awakening on the part of our people. Work of this kind does not properly fall within the province of the Committee on Education. It is only indirectly, that attention to the other evils would react upon this one.

2. The case, however, is different with the lack of means and equipment. This constitutes the financial phase of the problem. No substantial improvement can be made in the work of Jewish education unless a radical change take place in the system of financing it which is at present in vogue. Instead of being left to individual societies, the work must be controlled by one central organization. Such an organization cannot be brought about, unless that part of our community, which has been foremost in establishing the largest institutions of charity, awaken to the need of perpetuating Judaism, and to the recognition that the best way it can be perpetuated is by establishing institutions, where each child can receive at least six hours of Jewish instruction, each week, for a period of at least six years. It is only the well-to-do that can supply the necessary buildings, and have them properly equipped. Let the Kehillah give strong and unequivocal expression to such a demand, and let it authorize those at the head of it to make an urgent appeal to such as might respond, and the necessary endowment would be forthcoming. So have the universities, colleges and seminaries, both religious and secular, been endowed, and surely no one who still glories in the name of Israel would fail to respond to that which is Israel's most urgent need in this country, a richly endowed Jewish educational organization.

The expense, however, of the maintenance of the Jewish educational institutions must devolve upon the masses of the people. The city expends on the average of about \$40 annually on each child. A glance at the cost of Jewish education at the Talmud Torahs and congregational schools will show the average cost to be \$15, which is just what it ought to cost, considering the smaller number of hours which the Jewish child receives, and from which better results would, no doubt, have been obtained if there were a central organization. A system of education which would reach at least 100,000 out of

the 170,000 Jewish children of school age, would involve an annual expense of at least \$1,500,000, to say nothing of the increase in the child population each year. To meet such an expense various means will have to be devised.

3. The problem of introducing system and method into the institutional and congregational schools is one that is both within the province, and within the immediate capacity of the Kehillah to deal with. The two essentials for the solution of that problem are, (a) good teachers and (b) good text-books.

There are, no doubt, a number of competent teachers among those who are engaged at the various schools. In order to locate them where they are most needed, and to give them the proper encouragement to do their very best, the Committee on Education has appointed a board of seven men representing the most important of the schools, known as the Organization Board to work out a plan whereby those that are well qualified to teach should receive certificates to that effect.

While every effort, however, should be made to reinforce the position of the teachers who, in spite of the fact that they came to this country as adults, have succeeded in mastering the language sufficiently to use it as a medium of instruction, we must build for the future. It is inevitable that the type of teacher who will best succeed, will be the one who has received both his secular and Jewish training in this country, and who will not look upon his work merely as a temporary means of support. When we, therefore, bear in mind that even under ideal conditions it will be impossible for Jewish education to afford a comfortable livelihood except to a few, by reason of the limited number of hours that a Jewish teacher can teach, it is evident that Jewish teachers will have to be sought from among those who teach in elementary and secondary schools. It should, therefore, be the task of the Kehillah

to encourage, by means of prizes and scholarships, those students in the colleges and training schools as are preparing to teach in the city schools, to prepare themselves also as Jewish teachers, by taking courses at the newly established Teachers' Institute.

No less important is the supply of text-books in which the Jewish education work is sadly deficient. Most of the Hebrew text-books which are in use, outside of the Bible and the prayer book, are written in Russia and are adapted to the work there, and not to the needs here. Still more deficient are we in proper text-books on Jewish history and religion. It will be the task of the Kehillah to enlist the services of such men as have made a close study of the problems of Jewish pedagogy to furnish such text-books. Furthermore, besides text-books for the use of pupils we are in need of educational literature which ought to deal with the problems of Jewish education from a theoretical point of view.

Given the proper teachers and the proper text-books and Jewish education will receive both system and content. To bring all this about is not the work of a day or even of a year. But a beginning has to be made, and no organization is so well fitted to attempt the solution of all these problems, as the Kehillah.

REPORT ON AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

MR. LOUIS MARSHALL

Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen of the Convention:

Considering the lateness of the evening, my report must necessarily be brief. I am, however, convinced that, after hearing what I shall say, you will reach the conclusion that the American Jewish Committee has not been idle during the past year. The powers of the Committee are laid down in the first article of its Constitution, which reads as follows:

"The purpose of this Committee is to prevent infringement of the civil and religious rights of Jews and to alleviate the consequences of persecution. In the event of a threatened or actual denial or actual invasion of such rights, or when conditions calling for relief from calamities affecting Jews exist anywhere, correspondence may be entered into with those familiar with the situation, and if the persons on the spot feel themselves able to cope with the situation, no action need be taken; if, on the other hand, they request aid, steps shall be taken to furnish it."

At the time when the organization of the Kehillah was under discussion, in anticipation of the creation of a democratic constituency for the American Jewish Committee in this community, it was expressly agreed that, in regard to all local matters, this Kehillah was to be supreme, and in regard to all national or international questions the American Jewish Committee was to have exclusive jurisdiction. Before the organization of this Kehillah, the American Jewish Committee found it necessary at times to deal with local matters, but after its organization the Committee confined its attention and

activities to matters of national and international scope only.

In dealing with problems which are thus brought within its jurisdiction, it has found it necessary to take up, as one of the most vital and momentous, the subject of the American passport, than which there is none of greater importance, not only to the Jews in particular, but to American citizens in general. So long as the American passport is not honored by every nation on the globe, the shield of our country is besmirched. So long as the American passport is not respected by every nation on earth, an insult is imposed upon our country, which it is the duty of every American citizen to resent. Hence, in vigorously dealing with this subject, the American Jewish Committee has been and is performing the highest duty of American citizenship. During the past year it has made representations to the President on this subject; it has had conferences with the Secretary of State; and although the proceedings are of a diplomatic character, as to the details of which it is unwise to make public announcement, I feel confident that there has been more progress made during the past year than ever before. Much remains to be done. The Committee is at this time contemplating a very important step, which may carry us far ahead on the road to success, and it is to be hoped that when we meet again, we may not be compelled to speak in general terms, but may present more tangible results.

During the past two years or more, there has been actively engaged in the investigation of the subject of immigration, a Commission appointed under an act of Congress. It is understood that this Commission has made a thorough investigation of the question and has prepared a valuable report. In the meantime there has been much agitation on the subject by those who believe in a restrictive or prohibitive policy. The selfish,

bigoted, narrow-minded and fanatic have been active. They have their organizations in all parts of the country; they have made all manner of false and deceptive representations to members of Congress; they have exerted to the utmost their influence on those members, and a series of measures all looking to the restriction of immigration have been introduced, and are now under consideration. The American Jewish Committee has taken up this subject and has made a most careful study of it, in all of its aspects; it has made extensive propaganda to the end that no legislation may be passed that shall further restrict immigration or close the hospitable gates of this country against the victims of religious persecution. The Committee has been accorded a hearing before the House Committee on Immigration, which is to take place on the 11th of March, and it has appointed a committee to present at that time the views of the Committee on the entire subject.

The Committee has also dealt with the matter of immigration in its other phases. Recently, as a result of certain Administrative regulations put into force, and particularly at Ellis Island, serious difficulties and hardships have arisen. The Committee has endeavored to prevent injustice to the immigrants and to mitigate the rigor of the rules which have been promulgated. During the past summer, a regulation denying the right of entry to an immigrant who was not possessed of \$25 was sought to be enforced. The Commissioner ruled that each immigrant was required to have \$25 as a condition to the right of entry. The validity of this rule was contested in the courts by Messrs. Kohler and Elkus, in co-operation with the American Jewish Committee, which bore the expense of the contest. The result of the proceedings, though not decided by the court, because the immigrants whose cases were tested were admitted by the Commissioner in advance of the argument, was

the withdrawal of the illegal regulation. A partial solution of a very serious condition was thus effected.

Immigration is only one of the many topics in which the Committee is interested. There is, for instance, the interpretation of the Naturalization Law. The law grants the right of naturalization to "free white persons" and to those of African descent. The Bureau of Naturalization has recently given instructions to the effect that the phrase "free white persons" refers to Europeans, and that nobody of Asiatic origin is to be admitted to naturalization. In consequence of this ruling, courts are divided in opinion as to whether naturalization should be granted to Ottomans, Syrians, Parsees and Armenians. Recently, Judge Lowell, of the United States Circuit Court of Massachusetts, in granting naturalization to certain Armenians, stated that if naturalization should be refused to Armenians he saw no reason why it should not be refused to Asiatic Jews. This is a proposition of vital importance, and will seriously affect Jews coming from Asia. If the argument once gains a foothold, that the right of naturalization is to depend on racial considerations, I do not know where we will land. The American Jewish Committee has taken up this fight in the courts, and there is a test case now on the calendar of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals which will shortly come up for argument.

The Committee has also taken into consideration, the right of a naturalized citizen to absent himself from the country for a length of time without losing his citizenship. Dr. Luria became naturalized some years ago, and then left the United States for reasons of health, going to South Africa. He remained there for five years, returned here for a short time, and when he again reached South Africa, an American Consul there refused to register him as an American citizen. The American Jewish Committee has undertaken to make a test as to the constitu-

tionality of the legislation which seeks to deprive a naturalized citizen, thus circumstanced, of his citizenship. This case will soon be decided in the Federal courts.

Recently certain earnest and sincere members of the Community have seen fit to criticise a statement made before the Immigration Commission by a member of the American Jewish Committee, Judge Mack, than whom there is no better exponent of Judaism or Jewishness in this country, no more loyal Jew, or better American, or nobler-hearted citizen. A few months ago, without much notice or opportunity for conference, the Committee was invited to send a representative to attend a hearing of the Immigration Commission. Judge Mack, who happened to be able to go, was requested to proceed to Washington, to be present at the hearing. He proceeded to the Capital, with the intention of presenting his views regarding immigration in general. While there, Mr. Simon Wolf, who represented the Board of Delegates, outlined his views as to the classification "Hebrews" in the reports of the Commission. It is obvious from the debates, that those members of the Commission who are known to be the exponents of restriction were most insistent upon the making of returns and reports based on racial or religious classification. In the course of the discussion, Judge Mack, solely for himself, in his individual capacity, and for the purpose of coming to the assistance of Mr. Wolf, made a few suggestions as to the proposed classification, based largely on its constitutional, rather than on its anthropological or ethnological aspects. So far as that side of the subject is concerned, I have indicated certain dangers that threaten us should the Government, in its legislation, at this late day begin to distinguish between races. When the vexed question of anthropology comes to the front, as to which scientists are in violent

disagreement, what can the layman contribute to the discussion? All controversies relating to religion, race or nationality, should be studiously avoided. There is peril in the first step. We should not be the ones to throw down the gauntlet. The American Jewish Committee has no apology to make with respect to its past attitude. For reasons of policy, it has not in the past considered it prudent to press the subject, or to become embroiled in any controversy. That was its position years ago when the matter of classification first received consideration. That was its position later, when a committee appointed for the express purpose of studying the problem advised that no action be taken. That is the position of the Committee today, as evidenced by its letter to this Kehillah, which I will now read

BERNARD G. RICHARDS, Esq.,
Jewish Community of New York City,
356 Second Avenue, N. Y.

Dear Sir:—

In reply to your letter of the 18th inst., enclosing a copy of the resolution adopted by the Advisory Council of the New York Jewish Community and approved by its Executive Committee, I am instructed to inform you that, at its meeting on December 28, 1909, the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Committee resolved that it was unwise to make any further attempt to have the classification "Hebrew," altered, as no good purpose can at this time be attained by any further agitation of the subject.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) HERBERT FRIEDENWALD,
Secretary.

The Committee is also engaged in the collection of statistics in regard to all matters of Jewish interest.

It has on file in its office, articles, clippings and publications containing valuable data. Besides, the Committee publishes annually the American Jewish Year Book, which is a directory of great usefulness and a repository of knowledge for all engaged in Jewish communal affairs.

I have thus indicated in barest outline, a part of the activities of the Committee during the past year, and I trust that I have made clear to you in this informal way, that the Committee is diligently and conscientiously engaged in important and useful work, redounding to the welfare of the Jews throughout the world.

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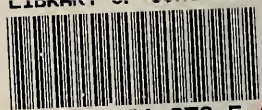
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